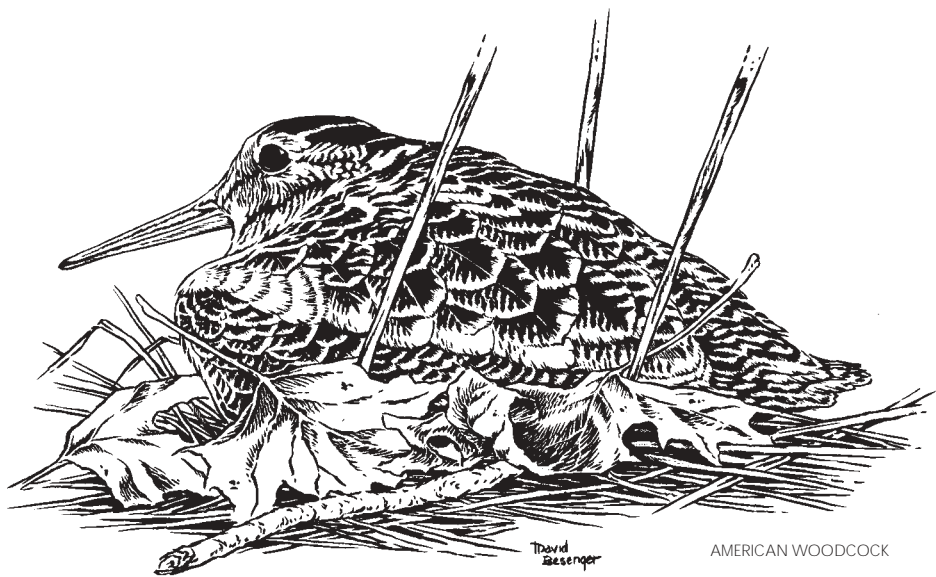




2003 MIGRATORY BIRD HUNTING DIGEST

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Doves, Rails, Snipe, Teal and Woodcock



AMERICAN WOODCOCK

2003 Migratory Bird Hunting Digest

Missouri Department of Conservation
P.O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180
(573) 751-4115
www.missouriconservation.org

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Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, or U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 18th and C Streets NW, Washington, D.C. 20240, Missouri Relay Center —1-800-735-2966 (TDD).

Dove Regulations

New last year was the addition of the Eurasian collared dove and the white-winged dove as legal species to hunt. This change provides hunting opportunity for all three dove species while maintaining the integrity of the mourning dove limits. The combined daily bag limit of all three dove species is 12, with a combined possession limit of 24.

Mourning doves are found in every county in Missouri, with the greatest densities in the southeastern portion. They benefit from cultivated areas and are especially abundant in fields, orchards or generally weedy areas.

The other two dove species are expanding their ranges into Missouri. Eurasian collared doves have been documented statewide; greatest concentrations are in the southeast, with numerous reports from the southwest and along major river drainages. White-winged doves, native to the southern United States, also are increasing statewide.

Predictions about distribution and numbers are difficult to make prior to the hunting season because doves depend upon the weather and food availability. Doves prefer relatively open areas to search for seeds on the ground. Preferred food varies, but normally include corn, sunflower seeds and small grain. Doves also eat seed from pigweed, crotons, panic grasses, foxtails and ragweed, but sunflowers seem to be the most dependable lure crop.

Permit and Stamp Requirements

To pursue, take, possess and transport doves, rails, snipe, teal and woodcock in Missouri, a hunter must possess and carry the following permits:

1) **Missouri Small Game Hunting Permit is required of:**

- Missouri residents age 16 through 64, unless exempt
- Nonresidents age 16 and older

This permit is available to residents for \$9 and nonresidents for \$65 from any permit vendor.

Exemptions: The following do not need to carry a Missouri Small Game Hunting Permit

- Missouri resident landowners hunting on their own land

2) **Missouri Migratory Bird Hunting Permit is required of:**

- Residents and nonresidents age 16 and over

This permit is available for \$6 from any permit vendor. Purchase of this permit satisfies requirements for Migratory Game Bird Harvest Registration (you do *not* have to call 1-800-WETLAND).

3) **Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp is required of:**

- Every teal hunter age 16 and over

To be valid, the federal *Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp* (duck stamp) must be signed in ink across the face. Federal duck stamps are available for \$15 at U.S. Post Offices and selected permit vendors.

Permit Requirements for Hunters Younger Than 16

Resident and nonresident hunters age 15 and under do not need to purchase permits to hunt doves, rails, snipe, teal and woodcock in Missouri. However, they must either be in the immediate presence of a properly licensed adult hunter or have in their possession a valid Hunter Education Certificate Card while hunting.

Purchase Permits

Purchase the *Missouri Small Game Hunting Permit* and the *Missouri Migratory Bird Hunting Permit*:

- over the counter from any permit vendor
- by telephone anytime at (800) 392-4115*
- on-line anytime at www.wildlifelicense.com/mo*

*Credit card and \$2 per person surcharge required for phone and on-line purchase.

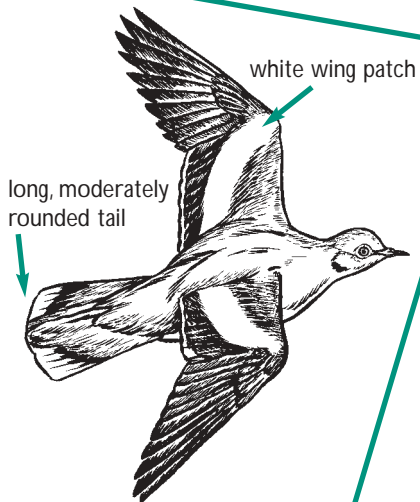
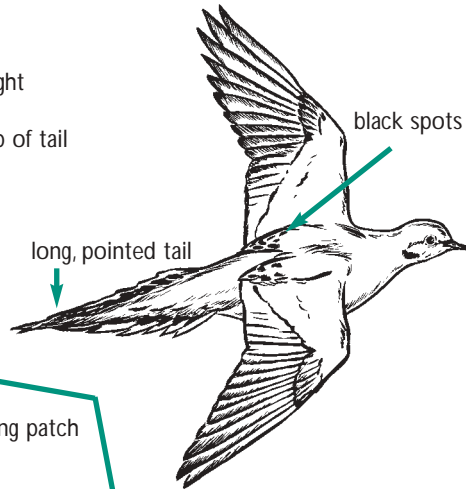
Note: You *must* have your permits in hand when you go afield to hunt. Allow 10 days for delivery when purchasing by phone or on-line.

Purchase the federal *Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp* (duck stamp) at U.S. Post Offices and selected permit vendors.

Know Your Doves

Mourning dove

- gray brown
- more rapid wing beat, erratic flight path than white-winged dove
- 12 inches from tip of beak to tip of tail
- call is a soft, inflected cooAHoo followed by several coos

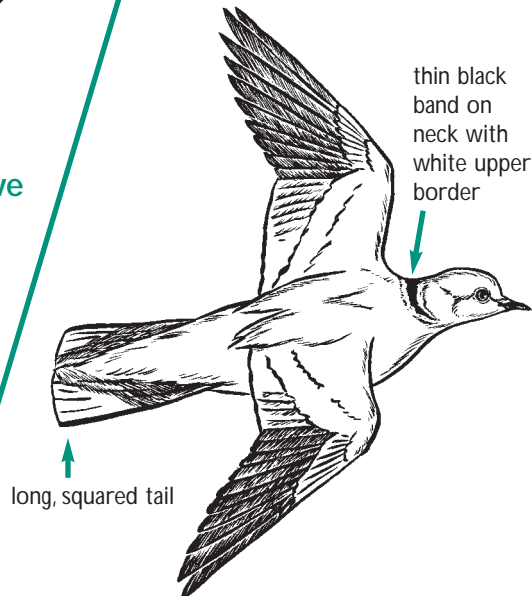


White-winged dove

- gray brown
- slightly larger than mourning dove
- call is a soft hoo-hoo hoo-hoo with the final note descending

Eurasian collared dove

- gray
- 15 inches from tip of beak to end of tail
- call is a three-part coo with similar tone to a domestic pigeon



Hunters Provide Valuable Dove Data by Reporting Bands

Mourning doves are one of the most widely distributed and abundant birds in North America. They also are a popular game bird that is hunted in 36 of the lower 48 states. In fact, more mourning doves are harvested each year than all other migratory bird species combined. However, wildlife managers have little information to guide harvest management decisions. Up-to-date survival and harvest rate information is critical to understanding the effects of annual hunting regulations on mourning dove populations, and banding is an important tool for obtaining this information.

Missouri, in cooperation with 28 other states, is participating in a nationwide mourning dove banding study. This three-year study will:

- determine mourning dove harvest rates
- estimate annual survival
- provide information regarding the geographical distribution of harvest
- develop and refine techniques for a future long-term dove banding program.

Over the next three years more than 85,000 mourning doves will be banded in the participating states. Doves will be captured, aged and sexed, and then fitted a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service band inscribed with an identification number and a 1-800 telephone number for band reporting.

It is important that hunters examine their mourning doves for leg bands. By reporting banded doves, you directly help manage this important migratory bird resource. If you harvest a banded mourning dove, follow the instructions below.

REPORT YOUR BANDS CALL 1-800-327-BAND

To report band numbers from all types of birds (not just waterfowl or other game birds), call 1-800-327-BAND (2263). You will need to provide the following information:

- the band number
- how, when and where the bird or band was found.

Bands also may be reported on the Web by going to www.pwrc.usgs.gov and then clicking on "Bird Banding Lab."

After reporting, the band is yours to keep. In addition, you will receive a certificate showing the bird's age, sex and date and location of banding.

Thanks for doing your part to help manage our important migratory game birds.



Rails, Snipe and Woodcock Identification Tips

The following species also are legal to hunt during the migratory bird season. See page 12 for season dates and limits. Below are some descriptive details to help you find and identify these birds.

SORA, 9 inches from tip of beak to tip of tail, are common migrants that forage in marshes, swamps, wet pastures and flooded fields. Adults have a short, yellow bill and black face. Cheeks and breast are gray with black- and white-barred belly. The back is dark brown mixed with reddish tan and streaked with white. Their call is a loud, descending, nasal whinny.

VIRGINIA RAIL, 9 1/2 inches from tip of beak to tip of tail, forage in marshes and swamps for snails and earthworms. Adults have a black back with rusty wing patches, gray face, and reddish bill and legs. The underparts are cinnamon with heavily barred black and white flanks. Their call is a series of one- and two-syllable notes, *kik, kik, kik, kidik, kidik, kidik*.

COMMON SNIPE, 11 inches from tip of beak to tip of tail, forage in marshes, swamps, wet pastures, crop stubble and drainage ditches. They have a long bill, plump body, and black- and white-streaked head. The back is brown and black with strong white streaks. When surprised, it takes off in a zigzag pattern and calls a harsh *scaip, scaip*.

AMERICAN WOODCOCK, or timberdoodle, are 11 inches from tip of beak to tip of tail. They forage in young woodlands near water, moist pastures and forested floodplains. Most common in eastern Missouri along the Mississippi lowlands, they are distinguished by extremely long bills, round, plump bodies, short tails and legs, and large black eyes. The back is dark and the underparts buff. When flushed, its rounded, short wings make a startling whirring sound.

MORE DOVE HUNTING FIELDS FOR 2003

The Conservation Department has quadrupled the acreage and doubled the fields available for dove hunting for the 2003 season. Last year 48 fields were actively managed for doves. This year Department staff have listed more than 100 fields on Department areas throughout the state.

Managed dove hunting fields are planted in sunflowers, wheat, millet, buckwheat or corn, or a combination of some of the above. Each field provides a different type of hunting experience.

For more information about these hunting spots, their location and management, go on-line to www.missouriconservation.org/hunt/gamebird/dove or contact the nearest Conservation Department office (see page 11).

Teal Numbers Increase in 2003

Increased precipitation and late spring rains in much of prairie Canada and portions of the north central United States have improved habitat conditions for teal and other waterfowl for fall 2003. As a result, blue-winged teal numbers increased to 5.5 million during spring 2003, up from 4.2 million the previous year.

The timing of migrations, weather and wetland habitat conditions in Missouri have a much greater influence on hunter success than numbers of teal in the fall flight. Regardless, the status of blue-winged teal determines whether or not a hunting season is offered each fall, and the number of days allowed. Under the current harvest strategy, blue-winged teal population estimates between 3.3 and 4.7 million result in a season of up to nine days in length, and up to 16 days are allowed when the breeding population is above 4.7 million.

Blue-winged teal migrations into Missouri begin in mid-August and continue through September, well before the regular duck season. The majority of the September season harvest is comprised of blue-winged teal, while green winged teal usually comprise less than 20 percent. Annual teal harvest has ranged widely between 6,500 during 1993 to 34,500 during 1982.

In Missouri, September teal seasons are designed to coincide with blue-winged teal migrations and to avoid initial arrivals of other early migrant species such as pintails and shovelers. Even so, wood ducks reared in Missouri and also some early migrant duck species other than teal present hunters with the responsibility of identifying their target before they shoot. A sunrise opening ensures adequate light for correct identification.

For additional help in identifying ducks, purchase the Conservation Department's 16-minute video, "The Key to Duck ID," by calling toll-free 877-521-8632.

DAY	SEPT.		OCT.		NOV.		DEC.	
	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.	Rise A.M.	Set P.M.
1	6:38	7:39	7:04	6:52	6:35	5:09	7:07	4:48
2	6:39	7:38	7:05	6:50	6:36	5:08	7:08	4:48
3	6:39	7:36	7:06	6:49	6:37	5:07	7:09	4:48
4	6:40	7:35	7:07	6:46	6:38	5:06	7:10	4:48
5	6:41	7:33	7:08	6:46	6:39	5:05	7:11	4:47
6	6:42	7:32	7:09	6:44	6:41	5:04	7:12	4:47
7	6:43	7:30	7:10	6:43	6:42	5:03	7:13	4:47
8	6:44	7:28	7:11	6:41	6:43	5:02	7:14	4:47
9	6:45	7:27	7:12	6:40	6:44	5:01	7:14	4:47
10	6:46	7:25	7:13	6:38	6:45	5:00	7:15	4:48
11	6:46	7:24	7:14	6:37	6:46	4:59	7:16	4:48
12	6:47	7:22	7:15	6:35	6:47	4:58	7:17	4:48
13	6:48	7:21	7:16	6:34	6:48	4:57	7:18	4:48
14	6:49	7:19	7:17	6:32	6:49	4:57	7:18	4:48
15	6:50	7:16	7:18	6:31	6:50	4:56	7:19	4:49
16	6:51	7:16	7:19	6:30	6:51	4:55	7:20	4:49
17	6:52	7:13	7:19	6:28	6:53	4:54	7:20	4:49
18	6:53	7:13	7:20	6:27	6:54	4:54	7:21	4:50
19	6:53	7:11	7:22	6:25	6:55	4:53	7:21	4:50
20	6:54	7:09	7:23	6:24	6:56	4:53	7:22	4:50
21	6:55	7:08	7:24	6:23	6:57	4:52	7:23	4:51
22	6:56	7:06	7:25	6:21	6:58	4:51	7:23	4:51
23	6:57	7:05	7:26	6:20	6:59	4:51	7:24	4:52
24	6:58	7:03	7:27	6:19	7:00	4:50	7:24	4:53
25	6:59	7:01	7:28	6:17	7:01	4:50	7:24	4:53
26	7:00	7:00	7:29	6:16	7:02	4:50	7:25	4:54
27	7:01	6:58	6:30	5:15	7:03	4:49	7:25	4:54
28	7:02	6:57	6:31	5:14	7:04	4:49	7:25	4:55
29	7:02	6:55	6:32	5:13	7:05	4:49	7:26	4:56
30	7:03	6:54	6:33	5:11	7:06	4:48	7:26	4:57
31			6:34	5:10			7:26	4:57

This table is for Jefferson City and points on the same longitude north and south. For locations east, subtract one minute for each 13.5 miles of airline distance. For locations west, add one minute for each 13.5 miles. Sunrise and sunset from Sept. 1 to Oct. 26 have been converted to Daylight-Savings Time.

Federal Regulations Summary

In addition to state regulations, the following federal rules apply to the taking, possession, transportation, shipment and storage of waterfowl and other migratory game birds (**Note:** This is only a summary. Refer to Title 50, Part 20 of the Code of Federal Regulations):

RESTRICTIONS: No person shall take waterfowl and/or other migratory game birds:

- ✦ With a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10-gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive or stupefying substance.
- ✦ With a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler which is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.
- ✦ From a sink box, a low-floating device having a depression affording the hunter the means of concealment beneath the surface of the water.
- ✦ From or with the aid or use of a car or other motor-driven land conveyance, or any aircraft, except that paraplegics and single or double amputees of the legs may take from any stationary motor vehicle or stationary motor-driven land conveyance. Paraplegic means an individual afflicted with paralysis of the lower half of the body with involvement of both legs, usually due to disease of or injury to the spinal cord.
- ✦ From or by means of any motorboat or sailboat unless the motor has been completely shut off and/or the sail furled, and its progress therefrom has ceased.
- ✦ By the use or aid of live decoys. All live, tame or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such tame birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.
- ✦ Using records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds, or electrically amplified imitations of bird calls.
- ✦ By driving, rallying or chasing birds with any motorized conveyance or any sailboat to put them in the range of the hunters.
- ✦ By the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt, or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement), or on or over any baited area. Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after the removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is or was baited to be in violation. Agricultural areas must be prepared in accordance with official recommendations to be legally hunted. It is a separate offense to place bait on or adjacent to an area that causes, induces or allows another to hunt by the aid of bait or over a baited area.

BE AN ETHICAL HUNTER

- ☑ **Respect Other Hunters**—Your enjoyment, and theirs, will result from mutual courtesy in the field.
- ☑ **Respect the Rules**—Know all state and federal regulations before hunting.
- ☑ **Respect Biology**—We share responsibility for migratory birds and their habitat throughout North America.
- ☑ **Respect the Hunting Tradition**—Setting up too close to other hunters is neither safe nor ethical.
- ☑ **Respect the Resource**—Be sure that birds are in range and that you identify your target before shooting.

🦅 While possessing shot (either in shotshells or as loose shot for muzzle-loading) other than steel shot or such shot approved as nontoxic by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

CLOSED SEASON: No person shall take migratory game birds during the closed season.

SHOOTING OR HAWKING HOURS: No person shall take migratory game birds except during the hours open to shooting and hawking as prescribed.

DAILY BAG LIMIT: No person shall take in any one day more than one daily bag limit.

FIELD POSSESSION LIMIT: No person shall possess more than one daily bag limit while in the field or while returning from the field to one's car, hunting camp, motel, etc.

WANTON WASTE: All migratory game birds killed or crippled shall be retrieved, if possible, and retained in the custody of the hunter in the field.

POSSESSION OF LIVE BIRDS: Wounded birds reduced to possession shall be immediately killed and included in the daily bag limit.

TAGGING: No person shall give, put or leave any migratory game birds at any place or in the custody of another person unless the birds are tagged by the hunter with the following information:

1. The hunter's signature.
2. The hunter's address.
3. Hunting permit number.
4. The total number of birds involved, by species.
5. The dates such birds were killed.

No person or business shall receive or have in custody any migratory game birds belonging to another person unless such birds are properly tagged.

DRESSING: No person shall completely field dress any migratory game bird (except doves) and then transport the birds from the field. The head or one full-feathered wing must remain attached to all such birds while being transported from the field to one's home or to a commercial preservation facility.

SHIPMENT: No person shall ship migratory game birds unless the package is marked on the outside with: (a) the name and address of the person sending the birds, (b) the name and address of the person to whom the birds are being sent, and (c) the number of birds, by species, contained in the package.

PERMITS AND STAMPS: Waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and over must carry on their person a valid federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (duck stamp) signed in ink across the face by the user.

DUAL VIOLATION: Violation of state migratory bird regulations is also a violation of federal regulations.

Shot Requirements

Shells possessed or used while hunting teal statewide, or doves, rails, snipe and woodcock as designated by posting on public areas, must be loaded with material approved as nontoxic by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

As of mid June 2003, shot types approved as being nontoxic are:

- steel
- steel with coatings of less than 1 percent of either copper, nickel, zinc chromate or zinc chloride
- tungsten-polymer
- tungsten-matrix
- tungsten-iron
- tungsten-nickel-iron (TNI) such as Hevi-Shot
- tungsten-iron-nickel-tin (TINT)
- bismuth-tin

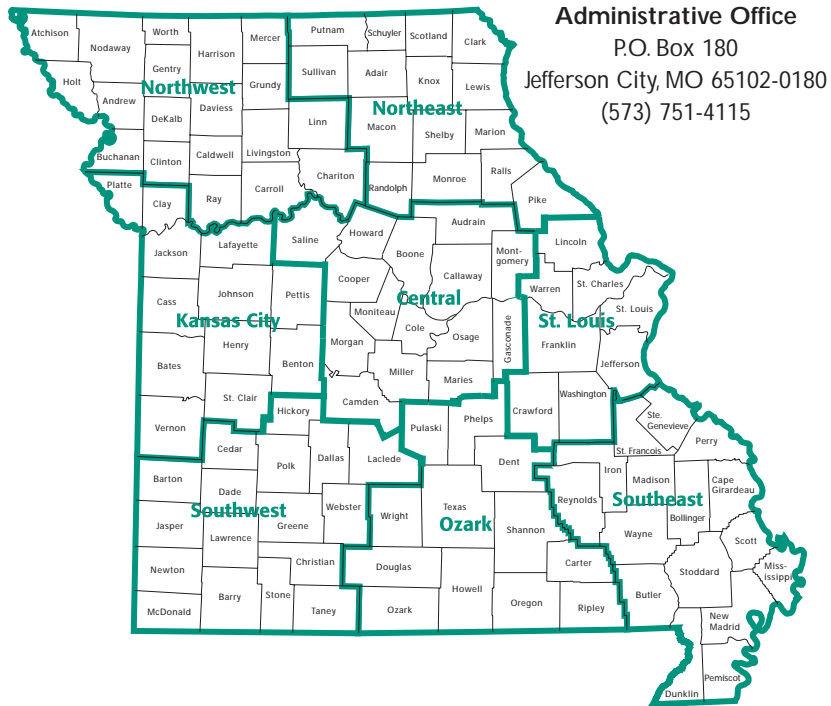
Note: Tin shot is *not* approved at this time. Check the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Website at <http://policy.fws.gov> for up-to-date information.

DON'T DRINK WHILE YOU HUNT!

According to Missouri law, you are committing a crime if you knowingly possess or discharge a projectile weapon while intoxicated. Don't endanger yourself or others by hunting while under the influence of alcohol.



Missouri Department of Conservation Offices



Web address: www.missouriconservation.org

Northwest Region

701 James McCarthy Drive
St. Joseph, MO 64507
(816) 271-3100

Kansas City Region

3424 N.W. Duncan Road
Blue Springs, MO 64015
(816) 655-6250

2010 South 2nd Street
Clinton, MO 64735
(660) 885-6981

Southwest Region

2630 N. Mayfair
Springfield, MO 65803
(417) 895-6880

Central Region

1907 Hillcrest Drive
Columbia, MO 65201
(573) 884-6861

Ozark Region

551 Joe Jones Blvd.
West Plains, MO 65775
(417) 256-7161

Northeast Region

2500 S. Halliburton
Kirksville, MO 63501
(660) 785-2420

St. Louis Region

2360 Highway D
St. Charles, MO 63304
(636) 441-4554

375 S. Highway 185

Sullivan, MO 63080
(573) 468-3335

Southeast Region

2302 County Park Drive
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(573) 290-5730

2003 HUNTING SEASONS

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	SHOOTING HOURS	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT
MOURNING, COLLARED & WHITE-WINGED DOVES	Sept. 1–Nov. 9	One-half Hour Before Sunrise to Sunset‡	12*	24*
COMMON SNIPE	Sept. 1–Dec. 16		8	16
SORA & VIRGINIA RAIL	Sept. 1–Nov. 9		25*	25*
AMERICAN WOODCOCK	Oct. 15–Nov. 28		3	6
BLUE-WINGED, GREEN-WINGED & CINNAMON TEAL	Sept. 6–Sept. 21	Sunrise to Sunset‡	4*	8*

*Combined total of all species.

‡See page 7 for sunrise/sunset table.

HARVEST SURVEY NEEDS YOUR RESPONSE

When you purchase your Migratory Bird Hunting Permit, the vendor asks you a series of questions about your last year's migratory bird hunting activities. The answers you provide place you in a category with other migratory bird hunters by type and amount of hunting activity. This allows the Conservation Department and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, through the cooperative effort known as the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program, to use harvest surveys to sample hunters from each category. This survey information is extremely important and is considered when establishing migratory bird hunting seasons each year. Your cooperation in supplying this information is vital. If you are one of the Missouri migratory bird hunters selected to receive a survey, please complete and return it even if you did not hunt or were unsuccessful while afield. All the information you provide is important. By completing the survey, you are doing your part to help manage these important migratory birds.